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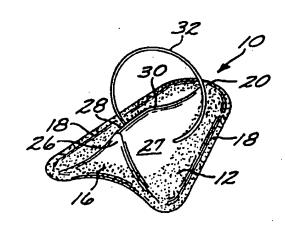
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(54) 【発明の名称】 尿失禁防止パッド

(57)【要約】

女性性器の小陰唇(40)と膣の前庭(34)との間 にフィットし、それによって尿道を閉鎖するようになさ れた弾性本体(12)から成る、女性の尿失禁を制御す るための尿失禁防止器具。尿道に対して液体密封を設定 するための接着手段(22)が本体に被覆されている。 本体は、膣の前庭の底面に座着するペース(14)と、 小陰唇に係合する1対の可撓性の側部フラップ(18) から成り、ベースに接着剤層 (64)が被覆されている。 ベースと接着剤層(64)との間に高吸収性、親水性材 の層(62)を介設することができる。別の実施例にお いては、本体(102)を筒状にし、接着剤(104) を本体の外表面に被覆する。本体は、生分解性材で形成 するのが好ましい。更に別の実施例においては、本体を 液体又はゲルを充填した可撓性サック又は袋とする。本 体は、小陰唇と膣の前庭の間に嵌合し、尿道を閉鎖する。 サックの外表面には、サックを尿道に対して密封係合さ せるための接着が被覆されている。



請求の範囲

1. 女性の尿失線を射御するための尿失線防止器具であって。

保道に密封係合して原道を閉鎖し、女性の外性器の解 創学的構造に主として付着によって所定位置に保持され るようになされた生物学的適合性材で形成された本体か ら成る原生禁跡止器星。

- 2. 可記本体は、女性性器の小陰器と顧の前庭の底面との間にフィットするようになされており、該本体は、該本体と尿道との間に密封係合を設定するための接着手段を有していることを特徴とする情求の範囲無し項に記載の尿失禁防止器具。
- 3. 前記本体は、(i) 膣の前庭の底面に座着するベースと、(ii) 小路唇に保合する1 対の質部フラップから成り、錠割部フラップは、女性の外性器の解剖学的構造にほぼ合致するように揺むことができる十分な換み性を有するように付形されていることを特徴とする請求の範囲第1 又は2 項に記載の尿失器防止器具。
- 4. 前記各フラップは、その換み性を増大させる長手方向の溝を有していることを特徴とする請求の範囲第. 3項に記載の尿失業防止器具。
- 5. 前記本体は、実質的に関状であることを特徴と する額求の範囲第1又は2項に記載の尿失禁防止器具。
 - 6. 前記ペースは、膣の前庭の、膣口の前方の部分

を被うように付形されており、前にパッドは、後端と、 前編と、後端から前端に向って互いに接近するに対した。 一パした1対の倒縁部分を有し、パッドの額倒線部分を有し、パッドの額線部の付形を 前端は、小階唇の下に押し込むことができるように付形 されており、該ペースは、該ペースを展道に対せて 保道に対して液体密封を設定するための接着手段を有し ており、それによって前庭に対する該ペースの座着係合 が、前路と該ペースとの接着係合によって実質的に維持 されることを特徴とする調求の範囲第3又は4項に記載 の原失義防止器具。

- 7. 前記本体は、トルエンジイソシアネートとメチレンジフェニルジイソシアネートの群から選ばれたプレポリマーを水活性化することによって形成されたフォーム材で形成されていることを特徴とする情求の範囲第1~6項のいずれかに記載の原矢器防止器具。
- 8. 前記接着手段は、前記ペースに被覆された機管 対層であり、数ペースは、放接者対層に近接して設けられた高吸収性、規水性材の層を有することを特徴とする 請求の範囲第3~7項のいずれかに記載の原矢禁防止器
- 9. 前記高吸収性、既水性材の層は、カルボキシメ チルセルロースとポリアクリル酸カリウムの群から選ば れた親水性材を含むことを特徴とする観求の範囲第8項 に記載の底失禁防止器具。
 - 10. 前記本体は、生物学的適合性の液体又はゲルを

充城したサックから成り、前記接着手段は、該サックの 外表面に被領された接着剤であることを特徴とする情求 の範囲第1又は2項に記載の尿失終防止器具。

- 11. 前記接着手段は、ボリ(2-ヒドロキシルエチルメタクリレート)と可塑剤との混合物から成るヒドロケル接着剤を含むことを特徴とする請求の範囲第2~1 0項のいずれかに記載の球失業防止器具。
- 12. 前記可塑剤は、ポリエチレングリコール、プロピレングリコール、ポリプロピレングリコール及びグリセリンの群から選ばれたものであることを特徴とする環水の範囲第11項に記載の尿失線防止器具。
- 13. 前記接着手段は、主として、ポリ(2-ヒドロキシルエチルメタクリレート)と、ポリエチレングリコール、プロピレングリコール、ポリプロピレングリコール及びグリセリンの群から選ばれた可塑剤との混合物から成るヒドロゲル接着剤で形成されたものであることを特徴とする請求の範囲第2項に記載の尿失謀防止器具。

14.前記本体は、膣の附庭の應面に選者するベースを含み、铵ベースのある似とは反対側の面にうねを有し、酸うねは、铵ベースが顔の前庭の底面に座着したとき、器間の空間へ突出するように付形されていることを特徴とする間求の範囲無1、2、3、4、5、6、7、8、9、11又は12項のいずれかに記載の原失類防止器点。

15.前記本体は、医薬効果を有する組成物を包含したフォームバッドから成ることを特徴とする請求の範囲第1、2、3、4、5、6、7、8、9、11、12又は14項のいずれかに記載の尿失禁防止器具。

符表平6-506368 (3)

明 細 書 尿失素防止パッド

技術分野

本発明は、人間の原矢禁に随停する問題を軽減又は域 和するのに用いられる器具に関し、特に、普良自在の女 性用原道閉鎖器具即ち原矢禁防止器具に関する。

技術背景

病気、怪我又はその他の原因に基因する原失鏡は、多くの人にとって厄介な問題である。重い尿失類患者をが、ほした、多くの場合外科的処理が必要是されるが、経度の膀胱制御機能要失症に罹患している患者や、、何らの理由が外科的処理に適さない患者のは自己を経度の理が必要である。そのような非外科的処理法は、「ストレス失禁」又は「焦燥失踪」とも称されるを経度の患れたレス失禁」以は「焦燥失踪」ともなるとを度の患者に強している。そのようなストレス失謀している。そのようなストレス失敗は焦めない。

女性の尿矢葉のための非外科的処置の1つとして、適 出尿を収集又は消集する額具を患者の皮道の近くに着用 させる、非治療的処置法がある。そのような器具は、一 般に、(1) 尿収集器具と、(2) 吸収性パッドの2つの部 既に分類される。

原収集器具は、通常、原道から流出した原を捕集する ための受けロ又は受け器と、受けロ又は受け器を尿道の

近傍に保持するための保持手段と、果を処分するために 尿を受け口又は受け器から貯留器又は容額へ導くための 手段とから成る。この部類に属する器具は、米国特許等 3,512,185号、3,681,155号、4,4 12.511号、4.457.314号、4.484. 917号、4、690、677号、4、822、347 号及び4、846、819号に関示されている。又、こ の他の原収集器具の変型器具として、一端を原道に挿入 するようにしたカテーテル響から成る、女性用外用カテ ーテルと称される器具(米国特許第4。563、183 号)がある。この種の器具では、多くの場合、その保持 手段は、磐階の空間(小陰器の器と唇の間の空間)に伊 入することができるように付形されており、女性の外性 器(以下、「女性性器」又は単に「性器」とも称する) の解剖学的構造によって保持されるように構成されてい る。上記米国特許第4,484、917号及び4、82 2. 347号の器具は、器具の保持を助成するために接 看剤をも使用している。

上述した吸収性パッドの認知に入る器具としては、一般に、 唇間の空間に挿入することができ、 女性性器の解剖学的構造によって保持されるように付形された吸収材製本体から成るいろいろな器具がある。 この種の器具は、 生曜用ナプキンに類似しており、 事実、 生曜用ナプキンとしても使用することができる。 この部類に属する器具は、 米国特許第3.983.873号、4,595.

392号、4,627、848号、4,673、403号、4,743、245号、4,804、380号及び4、846、824号に関示されている。英国特許第754、481号は、督問の空間に保持されるように付形されており、提出した尿を捕捉し吸収するのに使用することもできる生理用ナブキンを開示している。

上述した従来の各器具は、ある特定の用途には有用であるが、多くの欠点を有している。例えば、尿収集器具の場合は、使用者は、溢流しらい貯留器又は、軽度のしなければならない。又、この種の器具は、軽度のストは又は魚燥失嫌症に罹患している息をでしている。吸収パッドは、満張り易く、特に慣れたときには使用者によっては不快感を覚える人がある。又、尿吸無器具は、他人に気づかれるような具いを発することが多く、その点でも望ましくない。

上述した従来の野具の使用は、原道からの原の流出は止めることができない、あるいは止めるべきではないをいっている。しかし、この前提は、本質的に過彼的なものであるストレス失禁又は焦燥失器症の多くの患者にとって正しくない場合がある。ストレス失業又は焦燥失器の場合、原道を外部から閉鎖すれば、多くの患者にとっては十分な原抑制を適成することができる。しかしながら、促来技術では、この解決法は、少くとも大部分見透ごされてきた。

使って、原道を外部から閉鎖することによって女性のストレス失禁又は焦燥失禁を効果的に制御することができ、使用が容易で、着用感が快速であり、良好な密封性を有し、確実に保持することができる器具を求める要望がある。 本発明は、このような要望を充足することを緊
思とする。

発明の開示

本発明は、上記課題を解決するために、基本的にいえば、尿道に係合して尿道を封止するように付形されており、女性の外性器の解剖学的構造に係合させることによって所定位置に保持されるようになされた弾性本体から成る尿道防臓器具を提供する。

特表平6-506368 (4)

いは、うねの後部に指穴を形成してもよい。

本発明の好ましい第2の実施例では、上記パッドを実 質的に筒状の形態とする。 従って、この第2の実施例で は第1の実施例のパッドが有する両側線部分即ち「翼」 がない。この「冀無し」実施佛のパッドは、前庭の既面 が「正常」と考えられる場合より狭い場合に使用するの に適している。このパッドも、やはり第1の実施例の堪 合と同様に、膣口の前方で膣の前庭の底面に座着し、そ れによって尿道を閉鎖する。このパッドの筒状部分は、 小陰器の内部に嵌合するように付形されており、パッド は、陰唇に係合することにより、尿道に密封係合した状 窓で前庭にしっかりと当接されて保持されるようになさ れている。パッドの、ベースのある例とは反対側の面に は、中央長事方向のうなが形成されている。この中央長 手方向うねは、パッドが前庭に装着されたとせ、春間の 空間へ突出するようになされており、それによって、器 兵の着説を容易にする。

上記いずれの実践例において、パッドの、少くとも、尿道に密封係合する部分には、パッドを前庭に当着剤をでは、類水性にドログル接着剤を、現性のパッドと相俟って、拡質り、前庭の近傍の唇間空間を埋め、それによって女性性器の解剖学的構造にぴったり嵌合し、器具の保持力を高める。感染を防止するための適当な抗細菌剤又は殺菌剤をパッド自体に使布又は含浸しておくことができる。

本発明の好ましい第3の実施例では、上記本体をエラストマー材型の(従って、弾性の) 袋又はサックで構造し、選及はサックに柔軟な、しなやかな、生物学的適合性のグル又は液体を充填し、器具の保持力を高めるために本体の外面に昼圧性の、類水性ヒドログル接着別を被置する。グル充填サックは、唇間の空間内で拡がって女性の外性器の解剖学的構造にぴったり嵌合し、それによって、複句刺とも相俟って尿道に圧接して尿道を對止する。

本発明は、ストレス失禁又は焦燥失課制御のための新 組な優れた解決策を提供する。本発明の弱異は、コンパ クトで、目立たず、使用し易く、着用感が快速である。

この個具によれば、使用者は尿を効果的に抑えることができるので、尿を放出させて処理する従来技術の額具 に随体する上述した時間風を回避する。

本発明の軽具は、各個人使用者に最適にフィットする ようにいろいろなサイズ及び形状に形成することができ る。しかも、この軽具は、製造費が安く、従って、使い 捨て物品とすることができる。

図面の簡単な説明

図1は、本発明の第1実施例による女性用尿矢袋防止 路具の透視図である。

図2は、図1の翻具の内側からみた平面図である。 図3は、図1の翻具の側面図である。

図4は、図1の器具の前方からみた立面図である。

図 5 は、図 1 の 数 具の 平面 図 で あり、 器 具 を 女 性 の 外 。 性 器 内 に 領 着 し た と こ ろ を 示 す 。

図6は、図5の紬6-6に沿ってみた新面図である。

図7は、第1実施例の器具の第1変型形態の前方から みた立面図である。

図8は、第1実施例の器具の第2変型形態の透視図で

図9は、図8の練9~9に沿ってみた断面図である。

図10は、図9と同様の新面図であるが、パッドの関 側線部分を摘ませたところを示す。

図11は、第1実施例の移具の第3変型形態の断面図 である。

図12は、図11と同様の新面図であるが、パッドの 両割線部分を摘ませたところを示す。

図13は、本発明の第2実施例による女性用尿失線防止器具の透視図である。

図14は、図13の単14-14に沿ってみた新面図である。

図15は、図14と同様の断面図であるが、第2実施例の翻具の第1変型形態を示す。

図16は、女性の外性器の断面図である、第2契組例の群具を当でがう前底を示す。

図 1 7 は、本発明の第 1 実施例の第 4 変型形態の断面 図であり、パッドに超吸収性材の層を付設した例を示す

図18は、図17と同様の断面図であるが、静具を女性の外性器内に裁者したところを示す。

図19は、図18と同様の断面関であるが、水分を吸収した後の超吸収性材を示す。

図20は、本発明の第1実践例の第5変型形態による 、指穴を備えた女性用尿失線的止器具の透視図である。

図21は、図20の線21-21に沿ってみた断面図である。

図22は、図20と同様の新面図であるが、指穴に扱 を始めたところを示す。

図23は、図21と同様の断面図であるが、第1実施 例の第5変型形態を示す。

図24は、本発明の第3実施例による移具の透視図で ある。

図 2 5 は、図 2 4 の線 2 5 - 2 5 に拾ってみた断面図 である。

支放例

図1~4を参照すると、本発明の第1実施例による女性用尿失謀防止器具10が示されている。女性用尿失謀防止器具(以下、単に「器具」とも称する)10は、生物学的適合性の弾性フォーム材で形成された本体即5パ

ッド 1 2 から成る。パッド 1 2 の素材として適当な材料の1つの部類は、トルエンジイソシアネート(TDI)をはメチレンジフェニルジイソシアネート(MDI)を主体としたプレポリマーを水活性化する(プレポリマーを水と反応させて発生する炭酸ガスにより発泡させる)ことによって形成されたフォーム材である。そのようなプレポリマーは、米国マサチューセッツ州のW.R.グレースをカンパニーから「ハイポール」(TDI)又は「ハイポールブラス」(MDI)という間間名で販売されている。

あるいは別法として、パッド12は、セルロース又は は数様のような生分解性材で形成してもよい。又、パッド12は、生分解性のポリマー材で形成してもよい。例 えば、アミン基のような弱い主義結合部の加水分解によって生分解性とされるポリウレタンフォームをパッドの 無材として用いることもできる。

あるいは、ポリマー主領にスターチのような弱い結合 部を編入することによって加水分解により生分解性とさ れるポリオレフィンのような更に他のフォーム材をパッ ドの素材として用いることもできる。

パッド 1 2 は、図 2 に示されるように先の丸い矢じりのような外輪前を有するベース 1 4 を構えている。本発明の第 1 実施例においては、ベース 1 4 は、図 4 に示されるように値かに凹面状とすることができる。別法として、ベース 1 4 は、図 7 に示されるように値かに凸面状

とすることもできる。ペース14を僅かに凸面状とした 形態の方が快速であると感じる着用者もいると考えられ

ベース14は、凹面状の後端16と、丸み付的端20 と、後端から前端に向って互いに接近する方向にテーバ した両側縁部分18を有する。従って、割端20は後端 16より多少個狭である。

パッド 1 2 には、それを膣の前庭の底面に当後させて保持するための接着剤表面を設ける。そのために、本発明のこの実施例では、感圧性の、親水性ヒドログル接着。剤から成る接着剤暦 2 2 を被覆する。そのようなヒドログル接着剤は、米国ミネソタ州のメトロニック・インコーポレイテッドから「プロメオン」という関係名で販売されている。そのようなヒドログルの組成は、米国特許第4、593、053号に詳述されている。

段好な効果を示した別のタイプの接着対は、ポリ(2ーヒドロキシルエチルメタクリレート)(PHEMA)とと可要剤としてのポリエチレングリコール(PEG)との混合物である。PHEMAの配合割合は、PEG前5%へ約25%に対し約45%へ約75%の範囲とする。PHEMAの配合割合を大きくすれば接着力を高くすることができ、へるり、PEGの配合割の全を対しののの分子量、好ましく、

は 4 0 0 の分子量を有するものとする。 P H E M A は、低分子量 (約 1 0 0 0 0 0 ~ 約 1 0 0 0 0 0 の分子量) の P H E M A と 高分子量 (約 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 を越える分子量) の P H E M A と の 混合物 で ある こと が 好まし 胃。低分子量の P H E M A は、接着剤の 構造的 一体性を 高める。 この P H E M A 混合物 は、約 1 0 % ~ 5 0 % の 低分子量 P H E M A と、約 9 0 % ~ 5 0 % の 高分子量 P H E M A の 混合 で あ り、 その 正確な 混合割合は、必要と される 接着性に よって 定める。

好ましい可愛剤は上述したようにPEGであるが、プロピレングリコール、ポリプロピレングリコール(PPG)又はグリセリン等の他の可愛剤を用いることもできる。

パッド12をTDI又はMDIで製造する場合、水活性化によってフォーム材を形成する上記水活性化工程においてTDI又はMDI(プレポリマー)と約0、25~0、50モルの水酸化アンモニウムを1対1の重量比で結合(反応)させることによってパッドの素材自体を摂着性にすることができる。即ち、このようにして得られたパッドは、正電荷を帯電した表面を有しているので、負電荷を帯電したムコイド(粘液機)表面(例えば、膣の前庭の表面及び小陰唇の内側部分)に付着する。

別法として、パッド全体を上述したPHEMA/PE G混合物のような接着剤で形成してもよい。

パッド12の、ベース14のある側とは反対側に、パ ッド12の最も分厚い部分を固定する中央長手方向の補 開うね28が形成されている。ペース14をパッド12 の「鹿部」と称するとするならば、パッド12は、ペー ス14の反対側にうね28から両側線部分18に向って 「下方に」傾斜した表面27を有しているということが でき、パッドの厚さはうね26から両側縁部分18に向 って漸次薄くなっている。別の見方をすれば、パッド1 2は、ペース14からうね26の頂き28に向って漸次 編が狭くなっている断面形状を有しているということが できる。従って、パッドの検新面は、図6にみられるよ うに、丸み付のかどを有し、値かに凹面状の辺を有する 三角形に似た形状を呈する。同様に、うね26は、図3 に示されるように、頂き28からパッドの前端20に向 って「下方に」テーパした前様30を有しており、パッ ドの前端20が後端16より相当に輝くされている。

翻具10には、パッド12と一体に成型した、あるいは、パッドに取付けた把手又はつまみを設けるのが有利である。 第1実施例では、把手はパッド12に横方向に通した、好ましくは紐のリング又はループ32である。ループ32は、うね26の前線30の近くに配置するのが好ましいが、ループの位置はその機能にとって決定的な重要性を有するものではない。

図5及び6は、失禁防止器具10を女性の外性器に資 着したところを示す。器具10は、そのペース14が歴

特表平6-506368(含)

口37の初方で望36の初庭34に座巻させ、それによって保道38を閉鎖する。パッドの接着耐象面中分に尿時間 22の表面は、尿の調出を防止するのに打削端20元 機能の分18及び初端20元 は、小路巻40の下に押し込まれる。うね26の傾斜表34にしっかりと押しつけて保持する力を高める。スペッド12の後端16が凹面状になるれている。ためのクリアランスを残すことができる。パロ26は、毎回37のためのクリアランスを残すことができる。のはこ6は、毎回0空間(小路巻40の唇を中で間の関から突出し、ループ32は、大路巻(図示せず)の別から突出して露呈され、器具を外す際に手で攫み易いようになされている。

パッド 1 2 は、いろいろな個々人に適合するようにいいるなサイズに形成することができる。パッドの長さは、 登口 3 7 の前野から小陰器の唇と唇の結合部までは、 設定の幅にほぼ合設する幅とするのが最適である。 使用者個人部自分に適するようにトリミングすることができるように予め大きめのサイズに製造しておくこともできる。 あるいは、特定の個人の外陰部の関連部分の型を扱り、それに合わせてパッドのサイズを決めることもできる。

接着刺層22は、尿道に対して液密密封を設定するの

みならず、個具の借りを止める働きをもする。中央長年方向のうね26は、原道からの液体(成)圧力を受けたときパッドの変形に抵抗し、接着剤層の破断を防止するための関性を付与し、それによって尿道を射止するパッドの密封力を高める。接着剤層22をパッドの傾斜表面(小陰唇に保合する表面)27にまで延長して被覆し、器具の安定度を更に高めることが有利な場合もある。

上述したように本発明の第1実施例に従って構成される失業防止器具は、少くとも水柱的100cmまで、好ましくはお170cmまでの範囲の尿からの短時間のほどにほとんど調れを生じることなく耐え得るように作ることができる。この範囲の圧力は、ストレス失弊では、放失禁などで無意識の辞尿を起させるときの通常の圧力は、一般的な成人女性であり、水柱的170cmの圧力は、一般的な成人女性にとって我慢し得るほど上限である。

随意選択として、バッドのフォーム材及び、又は接着 利表面に距離効果を有する超成物を付与することもできる。例えば、酸化銀やアジ化銀のような抗細菌剤又は殺 歯剤を用いることができる。

上述した第1 実施例には、特定の個人により快適に退合するようにいろいろな変型が可能である。例えば、図8~1 0 は、長手方向のうね5 4 の部分を除いて実質的に均一な厚さのパッド5 2 から成る変型器具5 0 を示す。この変型形態では、パッドの側部フラップ5 8 が、小陰唇に当てがわれたとき、図1~7 の実施例のものより

容易に摘むので、女性性器によりよくフィットすること ができる。

図11、12に示されるように、うね54の両側の各フラップ26に長手方向溝58を形成すれば、一層大きなしなやかさ(接み性)を付与することができる。

更に別の超ぎ選択として、図9、10に示されるように、ベースに短い突起59を設けることができる。突起59は、尿道内に全体的に又は部分的に受容されるように寸法づけし、それによって、器具の選正位置への設着を容易にするとともに、尿道の研鑽をより確実にすることができる。

図17~19は、第1実施例の更に別の変型形態を示す。この変型器具60は、パッドので、不力の変型器具60は、パッドので、現象性を有する。この就水性材は、PHEMA/PEG混合物のとうな接着剤と、カルボキシメチルセルロース酸カリンのような機関では、ボンクはボックフリルを受けてあることが好かの最62は、接着剤用度64からは、で、10回によって、10回には10回には10回に対し、10回に対し対し、10回に対し、10回に対し対し、10回に対し対し、10回に対し対し、10回に対し対しは対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回に対しまでは対しが10回に対しが10回に対しまでは対しが10回にが10回に対しが10回に対しが10回にが10回にが10回にが10回にが10回にが10回にが10回に

図20~22は、第1実施例の更に刻の変型形態を示

す。この変型器具70は、一体の長手方向のうね74を 有するパッド72から成り、うね74の機様に指穴76 が形成されている。指穴76は、器具の着脱を容易にす るために使用者の指を挿入するためのものであり、図2 0に示されるように、常葉ではつぶれた状態にあるが、 図22に示されるように指を挿入すると拡がる。

図21では、翻具70は、先に説明したような大製で パッド72のベースに直接被覆された接着剤層80を有するものとして示されている。

使用者の中には、前庭の底面の幅が比較的狭い人もい

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図24、25は、本発明の第3実施例を示す。第3実

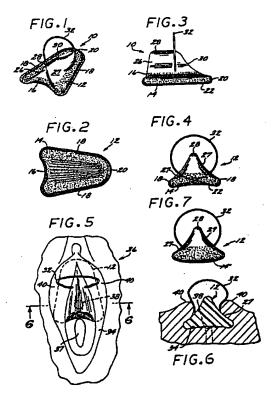
施例による女性用床失験防止器具110は、薄いボッキャレン又はそれに類する障い理性の可強性材で形成のクタはは112から成り、サック又は後112から適合性の液体又はゲル114を充壌し、注射針でできた穴を対止がある。サック又は後112に充壌するのに好ましいがかでは、上述したヒドロゲル接着新に類似したヒドロゲルでは、上述したヒドロゲル接着新に類似したヒドロゲルである。サック112の実質的に全外表面に上述したタイプの接着利116を被覆する。

使用において、器具110を小陰唇の下に挿入し、膣の前路の座面に座巻させて尿道を閉鎖する。サック112は、女性性器の解例学的構造に嵌針係合する。サックは となやかさ (強み性) を有するので、いろい のな解 制学 的構造に適合することができ、着用上の快適さを高める。この器具には、又、その着説を容易にするためのつまか 部材として使用される陰起耳片118を設けるのが 有利である。耳片118には、接着剤を被覆しないことが にましい

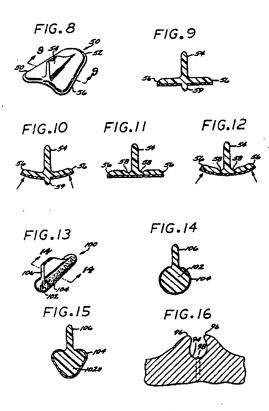
以上の説明から明らかなように、本発明の女性用尿失額防止器具は、従来技術の尿収集器具及び吸収性パッドに随伴する不便や不快感を伴うことなく、女性の尿失薬、特にストレス失験又は焦燥失禁を効果的に創御することができる。

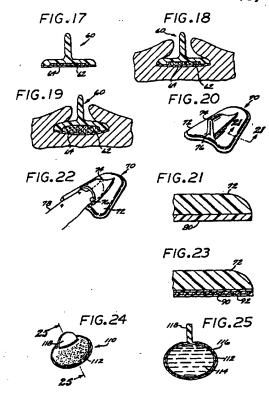
しかも、本発明の辞具は、使い易く、着用感が快適である。又、本発明の辞具は、最適の効果と着用上の快速さを得るために値々の使用者の局所の解剖学的構造にフィットするように簡単に形状及びサイズを定めることができる。

以上、本発明のいろいろな実施例及びその変型形態を説明したが、本発明は、ここに例示した実施例の構造及び形態に限定されるものではなく、本発明の精神及び範囲から逸脱することなく、いろいろな実施形態が可能であり、いろいろな変更及び改変を加えることができることを選解されたい。



特表平6-506368 (8)





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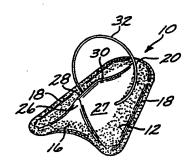
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(54) Title: URINARY INCONTINENCE PAD



(57) Abstract

A device (10) for managing urinary incontinence in a human female includes a resilient body (12) adapted to fit between the labia minora (40) the vestibule (34) of the vulva, thereby occluding the urethral meatus (38). An adhesive (22) is applied to the body to provide sealing with the urethral meatus. The body has a base (14) that seats against the floor of the vestibule, and a pair of flexible, lateral flaps (18) that engage the labia minora. A layer of adhesive is applied to the base. A layer of highly-absorbant, hydrophilic material (62) may be situated between the base and the adhesive layer (64). In a second embodiment, the body (102) is substantially tubular, with the adhesive (104) applied to the exterior surface of the body. tThe body is preferably formed of a biodegradable material. In another embodiment, the body is a flexible bladder or sac, filled with a liquid or gel, conformingly between the labia minora and the vestibule occluding the urethral meatus. The exterior surface is coated with an adhesive to providing sealing engagement with the meatus.

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URINARY INCONTINENCE PAD

Background of the Invention

This invention relates to the field of devices or appliances used to relieve or mitigate the problems

5 associated with human urinary incontinence. More specifically, the present invention relates to a removable external closure for the human female urethra.

Urinary incontinence, due to disease, injury, or other causes, is a troublesome problem for many

10 individuals. Surgical intervention is often required to treat severe cases of incontinence, but in those cases where the patient suffers from only a partial loss of bladder control, or where the patient is otherwise a poor candidate for surgery, nonsurgical treatment is called

15 for. Such nonsurgical approaches are particularly appropriate for female patients who suffer from the partial, sporadic loss of bladder control sometimes referred to as "stress incontinence" or "urge incontinence". Such stress or urge incontinence, in fact, is the most common cause of urine loss in adult women.

Nonsurgical management of female urinary incontinence includes non-therapeutic management, wherein the patient wears an appliance or device proximate the urethral orifice ("meatus") that collects or captures urinary discharge. Such devices fall generally into two categories: (1) urine collection devices, and (2) absorbent pads.

Urine collection devices typically comprise a receiving orifice or receptacle for capturing urine flowing from the urethra; retention means, associated with the receptacle or orifice, for holding the receptacle or orifice in the proximity of the urethral meatus; and means

for directing urine from the receptacle or orifice to a reservoir or a container or the like for disposal. Devices of this general description are disclosed in the following U.S. Patents: 3,512,185 - Ellis: 3,661,155 -5 Lindan; 4,412,511 - Steer et al.; 4,457,314 - Knowles; 4,484,917 - Blackmon; 4,690,677 - Erb; 4,822,347 -MacDougall; and 4,846,819 - Welch. A variation on the urinary collection device theme is the "female external catheter", disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,563,183 -10 Barrodale et al., which includes a catheter tube having one end inserted into the urethra. In many of these devices, the retention means are configured so as to be inserted into the interlabial space, being retained therein by the anatomical structure of the external female genitalia. The Blackmon and MacDougall devices also use an adhesive to assist in retention.

The category of absorbent pads includes a wide variety of devices which generally comprise a body of absorbent material configured so as to be insertable into 20 the interlabial space, and retained therein by the anatomical structure of the external female genitalia. Such devices typically resemble (and, indeed, can function as) catamenial sanitary napkins. The following U.S. Patents disclose devices that may generally be considered 25 within this category: 3,983,873 - Hirschman; 4,595,392 -Johnson et al.; 4,627,848 - Lassen et al.; 4,673,403 -Lassen et al.; 4,743,245 - Lassen et al.; 4,804,380 -Lassen et al.; and 4,846,824 - Lassen et al. A sanitary napkin that is configured for interlabial retention, and that could be used to capture and absorb urine flow, is disclosed in British Patent No. 754,481.

While the above-described devices are useful in certain applications, they are subject to a number of

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disadvantages. For example, the urine collection devices require the user to wear a reservoir or container that may be prone to overflow or spillage. Also, such devices are better suited to users who suffer from chronic or severe loss of bladder function, rather than those who suffer only from moderate stress or urge incontinence. The absorbent pads tend to be bulky, and may be uncomfortable for some users, especially when wet. Odor associated with urine collection devices is often noticeable by others, and is therefore undesireable.

Use of the prior art devices described above is based upon the assumption that the flow of urine out of the urethra cannot or should not be stopped. This assumption may not be true in many cases of stress or urge incontinence, which are transient in nature. In such cases, external occlusion of the urethral meatus may provide an adequate degree of continence for many patients, but this approach has been overlooked, at least for the most part, by the prior art.

There is, therefore, a need for a device that provides for the effective management of female stress or urge incontinence by means of the external occlusion of the urethral meatus; that is easy to use and comfortable to wear; and that provides for secure retention with good sealing qualities.

Summary of the Invention

Broadly, the present invention is a urethral meatus occlusion device, comprising a resilient body, configured to engage and seal against the urethral meatus, and to be retained in place by engagement with the anatomical structure of the external female genitalia. More specifically, in one preferred embodiment, the body is a pad that includes a base, having a substantially

triangular or arrowhead-shaped outline, that is adapted to seat against the vestibule of the vulva, anteriorly of the vaginal orifice, thereby occluding the urethral meatus. The lateral edges of the pad are configured to fit inside the labia minora, the engagement between the pad and the labia thereby retaining the pad firmly against the vestibule, in sealing engagement against the meatus. The side of the pad opposite the base is configured with a central longitudinal ridge that, when the pad is installed in the vestibule, extends into the interlabial space. A loop of thread may be inserted through the ridge to facilitate removal of the device, or a finger hole may be provided into the posterior of the ridge for the same purpose.

In a second preferred embodiment of the invention, 15 the pad has a substantially tubular configuration, and thus lacks the lateral edges or "wings" of the first preferred embodiment. This "wingless" embodiment is adapted for use where the floor of the vestibule is narrower than what may be considered "normal". As with the first preferred embodiment, the pad seats against the floor of the vestibule, anteriorly of the vaginal orifice, thereby occluding the urethral meatus. The tubular portion of the pad is configured to fit inside the labia minora, the engagement between the pad and the labia thereby retaining the pad firmly against the vestibule, in sealing engagement against the meatus. The side of the pad opposite the base is configured with a central longitudinal ridge that, when the pad is installed in the 30 vestibule, extends into the interlabial space, thereby facilitating insertion and removal.

In both of the aforementioned embodiments, at least that portion of the pad that lies in sealing engagement

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against the meatus is coated with a pressure-sensitive, hydrophilic hydrogel adhesive for retention against the vestibule. The adhesive, in concert with the resilient pad, spreads to fill the interlabial space proximate the 5 vestibule, thereby providing a conformal fit with the anatomical structure, which enhances the retention of the device. The pad itself can be coated or impregnated with a suitable anti-bacterial or germicidal agent to inhibit infection.

In a third preferred embodiment of the invention, the body comprises an elastomeric bladder or sac, filled with a soft, compliant, biocompatible gel or liquid, and coated with a pressure-sensitive hydrophilic hydrogel adhesive, to enhance retention. The gel-filled sac spreads within the interlabial space to conform closely to the anatomic 15 structure of the external female genitalia, and thereby seals against the urethral meatus, with the aid of the adhesive.

It will be appreciated that the present invention offers a new and advantageous approach to the management of stress and urge incontinence. For example, the device is small, unobtrusive, easy to use, and comfortable wear. By allowing the user effectively to retain urine, the device avoids the problems associated with prior art devices, enumerated above, that allow the discharge of urine. The device can be made in a variety of sizes and shapes for optimal fit for each individual user. device is economical to manufacture, and can, therefore, be a disposable item.

These and other advantages will be better appreciated from the detailed description that follows.

Brief Description of the Drawings Figure 1 is a perspective view of a female urinary incontinence device, in accordance with a first preferred embodiment of the invention;

Figure 2 is a bottom plan view of the device of
Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a side elevational view of the device of Figure 1;

Figure 4 is an anterior elevational view of the
device of Figure 1;

Figure 5 is plan view of the device of Figure 1,

showing the device installed in the external genitalia of a human female;

Figure 6 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 6
- 6 of Figure 5;

rigure 7 is an anterior elevational view of a first modified form of the first preferred embodiment of the device;

Figure 8 is a perspective view of a second modified form of the first preferred embodiment;

Figure 9 is cross-sectional view taken along Line 9-9
20 of Figure 8;

Figure 10 is a cross-sectional view, similar to that of Figure 9, showing the flexing of the lateral edges of the pad;

rigure 11 is a cross-sectional view of a third
25 modified form of the first preferred embodiment;

Figure 12 is a cross-sectional view, similar to that of Figure 11, showing the flexing of the lateral edges of the pad;

Figure 13 is a perspective view of a second preferred 30 embodiment of the invention;

Figure 14 is a cross-sectional view taken along Line 14-14 of Figure 13;

Figure 15 is a cross-sectional view, similar to that

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of Figure 14, showing a modified form of the second preferred embodiment;

Figure 16 is a cross-sectional view of the external female genitalia, showing a vestibule of the configuration for which the second preferred embodiment is adapted;

Figure 17 is a cross-sectional view of a fourth modification of the first preferred embodiment, wherein the pad includes a layer of super-absorbant material;

Figure 18 is a cross-sectional view, similar to that of Figure 17, showing the invention as installed in the external genitalia of a human female;

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Figure 19 is a cross-sectional view, similar to that of Figure 18, showing the super-absorbant material after it has absorbed moisture;

Figure 20 is a perspective view of a fifth modified form of the first preferred embodiment, which includes a finger hole;

Figure 21 is a cross-sectional view, taken along Line 21-21 of Figure 20;

20 Figure 22 is a perspective view, similar to that of Figure 20, showing the device with a human finger inserted into the finger hole;

Figure 23 is a cross-sectional view, similar to that of Figure 21, showing a sixth modification of the first preferred embodiment;

Figure 24 is a perspective view of a third preferred embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 25 is a cross-sectional view taken along Line 25-25 of Figure 24.

Detailed Description of the Invention

Referring first to Figures 1 through 4 of the drawings, a female urinary incontinence device 10, in accordance with a first preferred embodiment of the

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present invention, is shown. The device comprises a body or pad 12, formed of a resilient foam material that is biocompatible. One suitable class of materials is that of foams formed from the water actuation of prepolymers based on either toluene diisocyanate (TDI) or methylene diphenyl diisocyanate (MDI). Such prepolymers are marketed by W. R. Grace & Co.-Conn., Organic Chemicals Division, Lexington, Massachusetts, under the trademarks "HYPOL" (TDI) and "HYPOL PLUS" (MDI).

Alternatively, the pad 12 can be made of a biodegradable material, such as a cellulose or cotton fiber. A polyurethane foam can also be used, being rendered biodegradable by hydrolysis of a weak backbone link, such as an amine group. Other foam materials, such as polyolefins, can be used and made hydrolytically biodegradable by using weak links such as starches in the polymer backbones.

The pad 12 includes a base 14 that has the general outline of a blunt arrowhead, as shown in Figure 2. In the first preferred embodiment of the invention, the base may be slightly concave, as shown in Figure 4.

Alternatively, the base 14 can be made slightly convex, as shown in Figure 7, for those users who might find such a configuration more comfortable to wear. The base 14 has a concave posterior end 16, with lateral edges 18 that taper slightly toward each other as they extend toward a rounded anterior end 20. The anterior end 20 is thus somewhat narrower than the posterior end 16.

The pad is provided with an adhesive surface for retention against the floor of the vestibule. In this embodiment of the invention, the base is coated with an adhesive layer 22, comprising a pressure-sensitive, hydrophilic hydrogel adhesive material. Such hydrogel

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adhesives are marketed by Promeon Division of Medtronic, Inc., of Minneapolis, Minnesota, under the trademark "PROMEON". A detailed description of such a hydrogel composition is contained in U.S. Patent No. 4,593,053 - Jevne et al., the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

Another type of adhesive that has shown good results is a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate (PHEMA) and polyethylene glycol (PEG) as a plasticizer. The percentage of PHEMA may range from about 45% to about 75%, 10 with a corresponding range of PEG of about 55% to about The preferred composition is about 53% to 54% PHEMA and about 47% to 46% PEG. Lower percentages of PHEMA yield greater adhesiveness, while higher percentages of PHEMA yield greater durability. The PEG has a molecular 15 weight between about 400 and about 1000, with 400 preferred. The PHEMA is preferably a mixture of low molecular weight PHEMA (Mw between about 10,000 and about 100,000) and high molecular weight PHEMA (Mw greater than about 100,000). The low Mw PHEMA provides adhesive 20 properties, while the high Mw PHEMA improves adhesive structural integrity. The PHEMA mixture is between about 10% - 50% low Mw PHEMA and between about 90% and 50% high Mw PHEMA, with the precise mixture being determined by the particular adhesive properties desired. 25

While the preferred plasticizer is PEG, as described above, other plasticizers can be used, such as propylene glycol, polypropylene glycol (PPG), or glycerin.

If the pad 12 is made of TDI or MDI, the material of the pad itself can be rendered adhesive by combining the TDI or MDI one-to-one by weight with about 0.25 to 0.50 molar ammonium hydroxide during the water actuation of the foam. The resulting material has a surface that is

positively charged, so that it will adhere to a negatively-charged mucoid surface (such as the surface of the vestibule and the inner portions of the labia minora).

Alternatively, the entire pad can be formed of an adhesive, such as the PHEMA/PEG mixture described above.

The side of the pad 12 opposite the base 14 includes a central longitudinal stiffening ridge 26 which forms the thickest part of the pad 12. If one adopts the convention that the base is the "bottom" of the pad 12, then the pad 10 can be defined as having a surface 27 opposite the base that slopes "downwardly" from either side of the ridge 26 toward the edges 18, so that there is a gradual reduction in pad thickness from the ridge to the edges. Viewed another way, the pad can be defined as having a cross-15 sectional shape that narrows from the base 14 to the "top" or apex 28 of the ridge 26. The resulting configuration is such that a lateral cross section of the pad, taken through the ridge 26, produces a shape resembling a triangle with rounded corners and slightly concave sides, 20 as shown in Figure 6. Similarly, the ridge 26 has an anterior edge 30 that tapers "downwardly" from the apex 28 toward anterior end 20 of the pad 12, as shown in Figure 3, so that the anterior end 20 of the pad 12 is substantially reduced in thickness as compared to the 25 posterior end 16.

The device 10 is advantageously provided with a handle or tab that is either integrally molded with the pad 12, or subsequently attached to it. In the first preferred embodiment, handle is a ring or loop 32, 30 preferably of thread, that is inserted laterally through the pad 12. The loop is preferably located near the anterior edge 28 of the ridge 26, although the precise location of the loop 32 is not critical to its function,

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as will be described below.

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Figures 5 and 6 show the incontinence device 10 installed in the external genitalia of a human female. The device 10 is installed so that the base 14 is seated against the vestibule 34 of the vulva 36, anteriorly of the vaginal orifice 37, thereby occluding the urethral meatus 38. The adhesive surface seals the meatus sufficiently to prevent the escape of urine. The lateral edges 18 and the anterior end 20 of the pad are tucked under the labia minora 40. The engagement between the 10 labia minora and the sloping surface 27 enhances the retention of the pad 12 in engagement with the vestibule 34. The concavity in the posterior end 16 of the pad 12 allows for somewhat greater surface area for engagement by the labia minora, while leaving a clearance for the 15 vaginal opening 37. The ridge 26 extends into the interlabial space, and the loop 32 protrudes from between the labia majora (not shown), so as to be exposed to facilitate manual grasping, for removal of the device.

The pad 12 can be provided in a number of sizes to fit a large variety of individuals. The length of the pad should be approximately the same as the distance between the anterior lip of the vaginal orifice and the juncture of the labia minora. The width of the pad should optimally conform substantially to the width of the vestibule. Predetermined sizes can be trimmed individually for optimum fit. In some cases, a mold of the relevant portions of the vulva may be taken prior to sizing the pad.

The adhesive layer 22 not only provides a fluid-tight seal for the urethral meatus, but it also minimizes slippage of the device. The central ridge 26 lends rigidity that resists deformation of the pad and rupture

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of the adhesive layer under fluid pressure from the urethra, thereby enhancing the fluid-tight seal provided by the pad against the urethral meatus. It may be advantageous to extend the adhesive layer onto the labia-5 engaging surface 27, thereby further enhancing the stability of the device.

An incontinence device constructed in accordance with the first preferred embodiment of the invention, as described above, can be made to withstand short-term fluid 10 pressures from the urethra in the range of up to at least about 100, and preferably to about 170, centimeters of water without significant leakage. Pressures in this range are those that would typically result in involuntary urine voiding in cases of stress and urge incontinence, 15 with 170 centimeters of water being the approximate maximum bear-down pressure for a typical adult human female.

As an option, the foam material of the pad, and/or the adhesive surface, can be provided with a medicallyactive composition. An antibacterial or germicidal agent, such as silver oxide or silver azide may be used, for example.

The first preferred embodiment lends itself to several modifications that may provide better comfort for 25 certain individuals. For example. Figures 8, 9, and 10 show a modified device 50, which includes a pad 52 of substantially uniform thickness, except for a longitudinal ridge 54. This modification provides lateral flaps 56 that flex more easily than those of the embodiment of Figures 1-7 when engaged against the labia minora, thereby yielding a better conformal fit with the genitalia. Still greater flexibility may be provided by forming a longitudinal groove 58 in each of the flaps 56, on either

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side of the ridge 54, as shown in Figures 11 and 12.

As still another option, a short protuberance 59 may be provided on the base, as shown in Figures 9 and 10.

The protuberance 59 is dimensioned to be received wholely or partially within the urethral meatus, thereby facilitating proper placement of the device, and enhancing the occlusion of the meatus.

Another modification of the first preferred embodiment is shown in Figures 17, 18, and 19. As shown in these figures a modified device 60 includes a layer 62 of highly-absorbant hydrophilic material adjacent the adhesive layer 64 on the base of the pad. The hydrophilic layer 62 is preferably a mixture of the PHEMA/PEG adhesive and either a microsponge material, such as

- 15 carboxymethylcellulose (CMC) or a super-absorbant material, such as potassium polyacrylate. The hydrophilic layer 62 draws moisture from the adhesive layer 64 and absorbs the moisture, thereby prolonging the useful lifetime of the adhesive by delaying saturation.
- 20 Absorption of moisture causes the hydrophilic layer 62 to swell, as shown in Figure 19, which may enhance the sealing properties of the device.

Still another modification of the first preferred embodiment is shown in Figures 20, 21 and 22. In these 25 figures, a modified device 70 has a a pad 72 having an integral longitudinal ridge 74. The ridge 74 a finger hole 76 in its posterior edge. The finger hole 76 is normally in a collapsed state, as shown in Figure 20. It expands to receive the user's finger 78, as shown in Figure 22, to facilitate installation and removal.

In Figure 21, the device 70 is shown as having an adhesive layer 80 applied directly to the base of the pad 72, as previously described. Figure 23 shows still

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another feature that can be incorporated, as a further modification, into any of the previously-described variations of the first preferred embodiment. In this variation or modification, a scrim layer 90 is enclosed within the adhesive 92 applied to the base of the pad. The scrim layer 90 is preferably a thin, non-woven sheet of polyester that can reinforce an elastomeric material. In the present invention, the scrim layer 90 adds structural integrity to the adhesive material, thereby enhancing the durability of the device. As shown in Figure 23, the scrim layer 90 is placed in the adhesive before the adhesive is cured to a semi-solid. Alternatively, the scrim layer 90 can be applied to the base of the pad before the adhesive is applied, in which case the scrim layer would be sandwiched between the adhesive and the base of the pad.

It has been noted that some potential users of the present invention have a relatively narrow vestibule floor. This type of anatomical structure is shown in Figure 16, which shows a simplified cross-sectional view of external female genitalia, wherein the vestibule floor 94 and the labia minora 96 define a relatively narrow space proximate the urethral meatus 98. For those with this type of anatomical structure, the above-described first preferred embodiment may be uncomfortable, or altogether unsuitable. Consequently, a second preferred embodiment, illustrated in Figures 13, 14, and 15, is contemplated for such users.

In accordance with this second preferred embodiment, a female urinary incontinence device 100 includes substantially tubular pad 102, substantially the entire exterior surface of which is coated with an adhesive 104, of a type described above. The pad 102 has a longitudinal

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ridge 106, preferably not coated with the adhesive, that is used as a gripping element to facilitate installation and removal. As shown in Figures 13 and 14, the tubular pad may have a substantially elliptical cross-section. 5 Alternatively, as shown in Figure 15, a pad 102a, having a cross-sectional shape similar to a rounded triangle, may be more suitable for some users. Optionally, a protuberance (not shown), such as the protuberance 59 shown in Figures 9 and 10 and described above, can be provided on this embodiment to facilitate proper placement and to enhance occlusion.

Figures 24 and 25 illustrate a third preferred embodiment of the invention. A urinary incontinence device 110, in accordance with this embodiment, includes a thin, flexible sac or bladder 112, formed of polyurethane or a similar thin, resilient, flexible material. The sac 112 is filled with a suitable biocompatible liquid or gel 114 by means of a needle, and the needle hole is then sealed, thereby forming a compliant sac. A preferred material for filling the sac is a hydrogel, similar the hydrogel adhesives described above. Substantially the entire exterior surface of the sac is coated with an adhesive 116, of a type described above.

In use, the device 110 is inserted under the labia minora so as to be seated against the floor of the vestibule, occluding the urethral meatus. The sac conforms to the anatomical structure of the external female genitalia, filling the interlabial space, and sealing against the urethral meatus with the aid of the adhesive. Because the sac is so compliant, it can be used for a wide variety of anatomical structures, providing high levels of comfort. The device may advantageously be provided with a raised tab 118, not coated with the

adhesive, to be gripped by the user, to facilitate the installation and removal of the device 110.

From the foregoing, the advantages of the present invention will be readily appreciated. The incontinence device in accordance with the present invention provides effective management of female urinary incontinence, especially stress and urge incontinence, without the inconvenience and discomfort associated with prior art urine collection devices and absorbent pads. The present invention is easy to use and comfortable to wear. It is easily shaped and sized to fit each individual user's anatomy with optimum effectiveness and comfort. Easily and inexpensively manufactured, the present invention can be made as a disposable item.

While several preferred embodiments and modifications thereof have been described above, it should be understood that still further modifications and variations will suggest themselves to those skilled in the pertinent arts. Such variations and modifications should be considered within the spirit and scope of the invention, as defined in the claims that follow.

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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An incontinence device for managing urinary incontinence in a human female, comprising:

a body of biocompatible material adapted to fit between the labia minora and the floor of the vestibule of the vulva of the human female, so as to occlude the urethral meatus; and

adhesive means on the body for providing a sealing engagement between the body and the urethral meatus.

- 2. The device of Claim 1, wherein the body is a pad having a base that seats against the floor of the vestibule and a pair of lateral flaps that engage the labia minora, the lateral flaps being configured so as to allow a substantial amount of flexing to conform to the anatomical structure of the external genitalia of the human female.
- 3. The device of Claim 2, wherein each of the lateral flaps has a longitudinal groove that increases the 20 flexibility of the lateral flaps.
 - 4. The device of Claim 1, wherein the body has a longitudinal ridge.
- 5. The device of Claim 4, wherein the longitudinal ridge has a posterior edge with a hole adapted to receive 25 a human finger.
 - 6. The device of Claim 4, wherein the body is substantially tubular.
 - 7. The device of Claim 6, wherein the body has a substantially elliptical cross-section.
- 30 8. The device of Claim 6, wherein the body has a cross-section that is substantially in the form of a rounded triangle.
 - 9. The device of Claim 1, wherein the body is a pad

having a base that seats against the floor of the vestibule, and a pair of lateral flaps that engage the labia minora of the human female, wherein the adhesive means includes a layer of adhesive material applied to the base, the device further comprising:

- a layer of highly-absorbant, hydrophilic material between the base of the pad and the layer of adhesive material.
- 10. The device of Claim 9, wherein the hydrophilic
 10 material includes potassium polyacrylate.
 - 11. The device of Claim 9, wherein the hydrophilic material includes carboxymethylcellulose.
- 12. The device of Claim 9, wherein the hydrophilic material is a mixture of adhesive material and a material15 selected from a group consisting of carboxymethylcellulose and potassium polyacrylate.
 - 13. The device of Claim 1, wherein the body is substantially made of a biodegradable material.
- 14. The device of Claim 13, wherein the 20 biodegradable material is selected from a group consisting of cotton fiber, cellulose fiber, and a biodegradable polymeric foam.
- 15. The device of Claim 1, wherein the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer.
 - 16. The device of Claim 15, wherein the plasticizer is selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol, propylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, and glycerin.
- 30 17. The device of Claim 1, wherein the body comprises a sac filled with a biocompatible liquid or gel material, and wherein the adhesive means includes a coating of adhesive material on the exterior surface of

the sac.

- 18. The device of Claim 1, wherein the body is a pad having a base that seats against the floor of the vestibule and a pair of lateral flaps that engage the labia minora, wherein the adhesive means includes a layer of adhesive material applied to the base, the device further comprising:
 - a layer of scrim material between the base and the layer of adhesive material.
- 10 19. The device of Claim 18, wherein the scrim material includes a thin sheet formed substantially from a polyester.
- 20. The device of Claim 1, further comprising: a protuberance on the body dimensioned to be 15 received at least partially within the urethral meatus.
- 21. The device of Claim 1, wherein the body and the adhesive means are formed substantially of a hydrogel comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, propylene glycol, and glycerin.
 - 22. An incontinence device for managing urinary incontinence in a human female, comprising:
- a pad dimensioned and shaped for fitting between
 the labia minora and the vestibule and including a base
 and adhesive means on the base for sealing against and
 occluding the urethral meatus of the user, the pad being
 retained in place against the urethral meatus
 substantially by adhesion to the vestibule of the user,
 wherein the pad includes a pair of lateral flaps
 configured to engage the labia minora with a substantial
 amount of flexing so as to conform to the anatomical
 structure of the external genitalia.

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- 23. The device of Claim 22, wherein each of the lateral flaps includes a longitudinal groove that increases the flexibility of the flaps.
- 24. The device of Claim 22, wherein the base includes a protuberance dimensioned to be received at least partially within the urethral meatus.
- 25. The device of Claim 22, wherein the pad is made of a biodegradable material selected from a group consisting of cotton fiber, cellulose fiber, and biodegradable polymeric foam.
- 26. The device of Claim 22, wherein the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, propylene glycol, and glycerin.
- 27. An incontinence device for managing urinary incontinence in a human female, comprising:
- a pad dimensioned and shaped for fitting between the labia minora and the vestibule and including a base and adhesive means on the base for sealing against and occluding the urethral meatus of the user, the pad being retained in place against the urethral meatus substantially by adhesion to the vestibule of the user, the pad including a longitudinal ridge with a posterior edge having a hole adapted to receive a human finger.
- 28. The device of Claim 27, wherein the pad is made of a biodegradable material selected from a group consisting of cotton fiber, cellulose fiber, and biodegradable polymeric foam.
- 29. The device of Claim 27, wherein the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol,

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polypropylene glycol, propylene glycol, and glycerin.

30. An incontinence device for managing urinary incontinence in a human female, comprising:

a substantially tubular pad of resilient

material adapted to fit between the labia minora and the
floor of the vestibule of the vulva of the user, so as to
occlude the urethral meatus; and

adhesive means on the pad for providing a sealing engagement between the pad and the urethral meatus.

- 31. The device of Claim 30, wherein the pad has a longitudinal ridge.
- 32. The device of Claim 30, wherein the pad is made of a biodegradable material selected from a group15 consisting of cotton fiber, cellulose fiber, and biodegradable polymeric foam.
 - 33. The device of Claim 30, wherein the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, propylene glycol, and glycerin.
 - 34. An incontinence device for managing urinary incontinence in a human female, comprising:
- a pad dimensioned and shaped for fitting

 25 between the labia minora and the vestibule and including a
 base and adhesive means on the base for sealing against
 and occluding the urethral meatus of the user, the pad
 being retained in place against the urethral meatus
 substantially by adhesion to the vestibule of the user,

 30 wherein the adhesive means includes a layer of adhesive
 material applied to the base, the device further
 comprising:

a layer of highly-absorbant hydrophilic material

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between the base of the pad and the layer of adhesive material.

- 35. The device of Claim 34, wherein the hydrophilic material includes potassium polyacrylate.
- 36. The device of Claim 34, wherein the hydrophilic material includes carboxymethylcellulose.
- 37. The device of Claim 34, wherein the hydrophilic material is a mixture of adhesive material and microsponge material selected from a group consisting of carboxymethylcellulose and potassium polyacrylate.
- 38. The device of Claim 34, wherein the pad is made of a biodegradable material selected from a group consisting of cotton fiber, cellulose fiber, and biodegradable polymeric foam.
- 39. The device of Claim 34, wherein the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, propylene glycol, and glycerin.
 - 40. An incontinence device for managing urinary incontinence in a human female, comprising:
 - a pad dimensioned and shaped for fitting between the labia minora and the vestibule and including a base and adhesive means on the base for sealing against and occluding the urethral meatus of the user, the pad being retained in place against the urethral meatus substantially by adhesion to the vestibule of the user, wherein the adhesive means includes a layer of adhesive material applied to the base, the device further comprising:
 - a layer of scrim material between the base of the pad and the layer of adhesive material.
 - 41. The device of Claim 40, wherein the scrim

material includes a thin sheet formed substantially from a polyester.

- 42. The device of Claim 40, wherein the pad is made of a biodegradable material selected from a group5 consisting of cotton fiber, cellulose fiber, and biodegradable polymeric foam.
- 43. The device of Claim 40, wherein the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer10 selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, propylene glycol, and glycerin.
 - 44. An incontinence device for managing urinary incontinence in a human female, comprising:

a sac filled with a biocompatible liquid or gel

15 material so as to fit conformingly between the labia

minora and the floor of the vestibule of the vulva of the

human female, thereby occluding the urethral meatus of the

user; and

adhesive means on the exterior surface of the 20 sac for providing a sealing engagement between the sac and the urethral meatus.

- 45. The device of Claim 44, wherein the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive comprising a mixture of poly 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate and a plasticizer
 25 selected from a group consisting of polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, propylene glycol, and glycerin.
 - 46. A device for controlling urinary incontinence in a human female user, comprising:
- a pad adapted to seal against and occlude the 30 urethral meatus of the user, and to be retained in place against the urethral meatus substantially by adhesion to the anatomical structure of the external genitalia of the user.

- 47. The device of Claim 46, wherein the pad comprises:
- a base adapted to seat against the vestibule of the vulva of the user; and
- adhesive means on the base, for sealing against and occluding the urethral meatus.
 - 48. The device of Claim 46, wherein the pad is made of a biocompatible foam material.
- 49. The device of Claim 48, wherein the foam
 10 material is formed from the water actuation of a
 prepolymer selected from the group consisting of toluene
 disocyanate and methylene diphenyl diisocyanate.
- 50. The device of Claim 47, wherein the adhesive means includes a pressure-sensitive hydrophylic hydrogel15 material applied to the base.
- 51. The device of Claim 47, wherein the pad is made of a foam material formed from the water actuation of a prepolymer selected from the group consisting of toluene diisocyanate and methylene diphenyl diisocyanate, and wherein the adhesive means is formed by reacting the prepolymer with ammonium hydroxide during the water actuation thereof.
- 52. The device of Claim 46, further comprising:
 handle means, operatively connected to the pad, for
 facilitating the removal of the device from the user's
 external genitalia.
- 53. The device of Claim 47, wherein the pad includes a posterior end, an anterior end, and a pair of lateral edges converging toward the anterior end, and wherein the base is dimensioned to seat against the vestibule anteriorly of the vaginal orifice of the user, inside the labia minora of the user, whereby the engagement between the labia minora and the pad contributes to the retention

of the base against the vestibule.

- 54. The device of Claim 53, wherein the pad includes a side opposite the base, the opposite side having a longitudinal ridge that extends into the interlabial space 5 of the user.
 - 55. The device of Claim 54, wherein the ridge has a longitudinal apex, and wherein the pad is shaped such that a lateral cross-section through the ridge narrows from the base to the apex.
- 10 56. The device of Claim 55, wherein the pad is shaped such that a lateral cross-section through the ridge has a substantially triangular shape with rounded corners and slightly concave sides.
- 57. The device of Claim 56, wherein the ridge has a 15 tapered anterior edge, whereby the anterior end of the pad is substantially reduced in thickness as compared to the posterior end.
- 58. The device of Claim 54, further comprising a handle extending from the ridge, whereby the handle20 extends between the labia majora of the user when the base of the pad is seated against the vestibule.
 - 59. A device for controlling urinary incontinence in a human female user, comprising;
- a pad having a base adapted to be seated against

 25 the vestibule of the vulva of the user, so as to cover
 that portion of the vestibule anterior of the vaginal
 opening of the user, the pad having an anterior end, a
 posterior end, and a pair of lateral edges converging from
 the posterior end to the anterior end, the lateral edges

 30 and the anterior end of the pad being adapted to be tucked
 under the labia minora of the user; and

adhesive means on the base for providing a fluid-tight seal against the urethral meatus of the user;

whereby the seating engagement of the base against the vestibule is substantially maintained by the adhesive engagement between the vestibule and the pad.

- 60. The device of Claim 59, further comprising a 5 handle attached to the pad so as to extend between the labia majora of the user when the base is seated against the vestibule.
 - 61. The device of Claim 59, wherein the pad is formed of a resilient foam material.
- 10 62. The device of Claim 61, wherein the foam material is formed from the water actuation of a prepolymer selected from the group consisting of toluene disocyanate and methylene diphenyl disocyanate.
- 63. The device of Claim 59, wherein the pad includes 15 a medically-active composition.
 - 64. The device of Claim 59, wherein the pad includes a side opposite the base, the opposite side having a longitudinal ridge that extends into the interlabial space of the user.
- 20 65. The device of Claim 64, wherein the ridge has a longitudinal apex, and wherein the pad is shaped such that a lateral cross-section through the ridge narrows from the base to the apex.
- 66. The device of Claim 65, wherein the pad is
 25 shaped such that a lateral cross-section through the ridge
 has a substantially triangular shape with rounded corners
 and slightly concave sides.
- 67. The device of Claim 66, wherein the ridge has a tapered anterior edge, whereby the anterior end of the pad 30 is substantially reduced in thickness as compared to the posterior end.
 - 68. The device of Claim 59, wherin the adhesive means includes a hydrogel adhesive applied at least to the

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base of the pad.

- **69.** The device of Claim 62, wherein the adhesive means is provided by reacting the prepolymer with ammonium hydroxide during the water actuation thereof.
- 70. A device for controlling urinary incontinence in a human female user, comprising:

a pad having a base adapted to be seated against the vestibule of the vulva of the user, so as to cover that portion of the vestibule anterior of the vaginal opening of the user, the pad having an anterior end, a posterior end, and a pair of lateral edges converging from the posterior end to the anterior end, the lateral edges and the anterior end of the pad being adapted to be tucked

a surface on the pad opposite the base, the surface forming a longitudinal ridge that extends into the interlabial space of the user when the base is seated against the vestibule;

under the labia minora of the user;

adhesive means on the base for providing a 20 fluid-tight seal against the urethral meatus of the user; and

handle means, attached to the ridge so as to extend between the labia majora of the user when the base is seated against the vestibule, for facilitating removal of the device by the user.

- 71. The device of Claim 70, wherein the pad is made from a foam material formed from the water actuation of a prepolymer selected from the group consisting of toluene disocyanate and methylene diphenyl disocyanate.
- 72. The device of Claim 70, wherein the adhesive means comprises a hydrogel adhesive material applied at least to the base of the pad.
 - 73. The device of Claim 71, wherein the adhesive

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means is formed by reacting the prepolymer with ammonium hydroxide during the water actuation thereof.

- 74. The device of Claim 70, wherein the ridge has a longitudinal apex, and wherein the pad is shaped such that a lateral cross-section through the ridge narrows from the base to the apex.
- 75. The device of Claim 74, wherein the pad is shaped such that a lateral cross-section through the ridge has a substantially triangular shape with rounded corners and slightly concave sides.
 - 76. The device of Claim 75, wherein the ridge has a tapered anterior edge, whereby the anterior end of the pad is substantially reduced in thickness as compared to the posterior end.

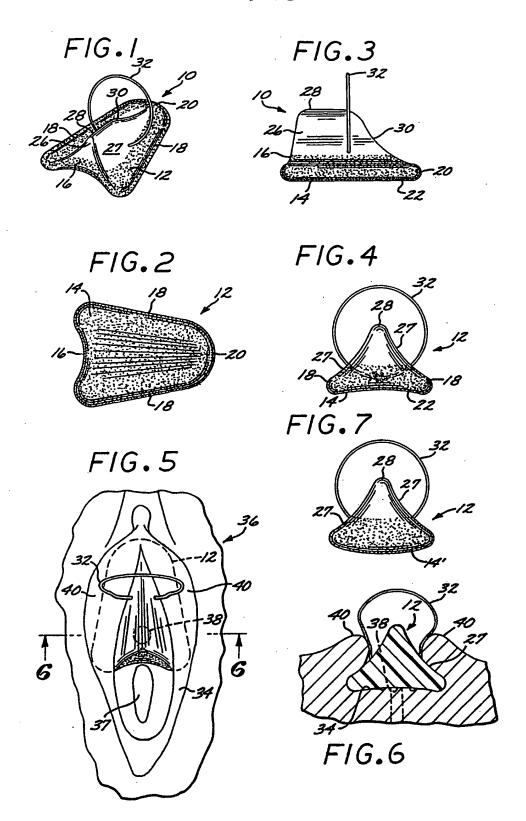
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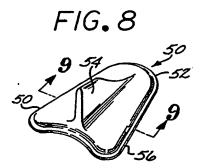
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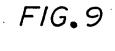
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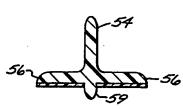
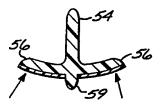
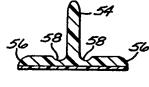


FIG.10



FIG.12





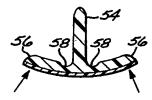


FIG.13

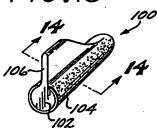
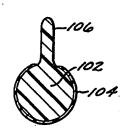


FIG.14



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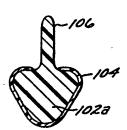
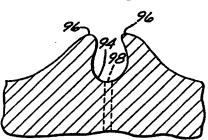
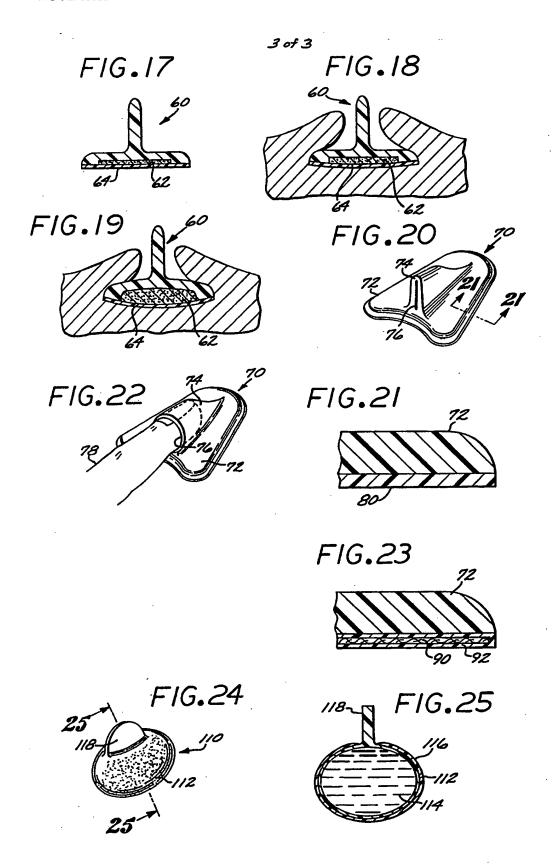


FIG. 16





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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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